



BCT UPDATE

Birse Community Trust

ISSUE 20

Spring 2009

The First Ten Years

At the end of 2008, BCT successfully completed its first ten years of operation as a company owned and managed by the residents of Birse parish to promote the common good of the local community.

BCT's achievements have attracted outside interest over the years and in December, BCT became the first community group in Scotland to be invited to make a presentation to the Scottish Government's Rural Development Council.

The Council's meeting was held in Finzean Hall and chaired by the Cabinet Secretary for Rural Affairs, Richard Lochhead MSP. BCT was then pleased to receive the following statement from the Cabinet Secretary in January congratulating BCT on its first ten years:-

"BCT has been one of Scotland's leading examples of an innovative and successful rural community business for the last ten years. During that time, BCT has made a remarkable contribution to community development in Birse parish. The Rural Development Council was very interested in BCT's presentation and the wider lessons for rural development that might be learnt from BCT's approach and many achievements. BCT has an impressive track record of delivering both local community and wider public benefits. I congratulate BCT on its first ten years and wish it continued success in the years to come."



L to R: Donald Silcock, BCT Chairman, Michael Russell MSP, Minister for Environment, Richard Lochhead MSP, Cabinet Secretary for Rural Affairs, Robert Dinnie, BCT Patron.

Community Assets Project

Issues 18 and 19 of BCT Update both described the on-going development of BCT's project to buy Balfour Wood and install a woodchip heating system at Finzean Old School that also supplies heat to Finzean Primary School.

By the beginning of the year, BCT had completed all necessary work and secured eleven of the twelve grants needed to make the project happen. BCT was only waiting for the result of the application which it had submitted to the Big Lottery Fund in October.

BCT's project successfully completed all the stages of the Big Lottery's demanding grant application process and went up to the final Lottery Committee in February recommended for approval. However, the Committee did not approve the project and BCT received a letter that explained very little about why the application was rejected.

The abrupt halt to this project after over 12 months work is a major disappointment to BCT. However, BCT's Trustees remain determined to try and purchase Balfour Wood because of its importance to the community and without which the woodchip heating system is not a viable scheme.

The view to the north from Balfour Wood towards Birse Kirk and the hills beyond.



Update No.20!

BCT Update is the Trust's newsletter for its members. The first issue was produced in summer 1999 to report on BCT's first six months. Since then, BCT has produced two Updates a year and after ten years, has now reached Issue 20.

BCT is pleased to have maintained the pattern and standard of BCT Updates over its first ten years. As a set, Issues 1 - 20 provide a good record of BCT's activities and development since it started. BCT still has some copies of the earlier issues and if any member wants to try and complete their set, they should contact the BCT Office.

BCT

Birse Community Trust exists "to promote the common good of the inhabitants of Birse parish and deliver wider public benefits".

Everyone on the Electoral Registers for the parish is a member of BCT and responsible for electing five local Trustees who run BCT on behalf of the community. The current Trustees are Donald Silcock (Chairman), Brian Page, Dorothy Dinnie, Jean Mcleod and Jacqui Christie.

BCT is a company limited by guarantee (SC188799) and a Scottish charity (SC28220) with its registered office at J&H Mitchells, WS, 51 Atholl Road, Pitlochry PH16 5BU.

